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# Mark's Missing Ending: Clues from the Gospel of John and the Gospel of Peter

*The Gospel of Peter may be unique among early Christian Gospels in its embracing of those details towards the end of Mark's story that other readers and authors both ancient and modern have found to be problematic, in particular the fear of the women and their failure to say anything to anyone.*

**By James F. McGrath**

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February 2011

Once upon a time, there was a scholarly consensus that the ending of Mark's Gospel in our earliest manuscripts, at 16:8, was the result of the accidental truncation or deliberate mutilation of a story that originally continued beyond that point.<sup>1</sup> Today, the consensus has shifted, and the majority of commentators appear to regard 16:8 as the intended conclusion to the Gospel. In this article, I hope to place the question of the ending of the Gospel of Mark in the context of early Christian oral tradition and offer some suggestions about how the *story* Mark knew continued beyond 16:8, irrespective whether his written *Gospel* once did.

It was the shift of focus onto narrative approaches to the Gospels that led to the change in the consensus about Mark's ending. But narrative approaches are not in principle antithetical to textual critical ones. Indeed, a key factor in any judgment about the relationship of our earliest copy of a work to what the author wrote will be our ability to make sense of the text in the earliest form in which we know it.<sup>2</sup> In the case of ancient literature, proposing emendations of the text we now have is considered not only appropriate, but at times necessary.

Some of the interpretations offered as attempts to make sense of the earliest ending of Mark deserve critical re-evaluation. For instance, it is often claimed that the final words, "They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid," leave the Gospel *open-ended*.<sup>3</sup> In fact, it is possible to reach the opposite conclusion: these words bring about an abrupt and awkward closure to the narrative, not least because, if they are true, then there is no way we could possibly be reading that particular part of the story. To quote Robert Fowler, "The story *in* Mark's Gospel seems to preclude the telling *of* Mark's Gospel."<sup>4</sup>

Yet it is possible to overstate the problem, and at least some interpreters of Mark's story appear to have done so. To provide a basis for comparison, in order to help us

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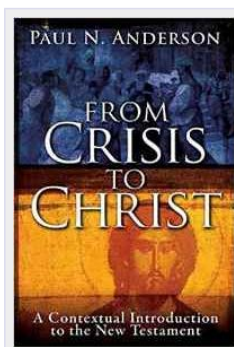
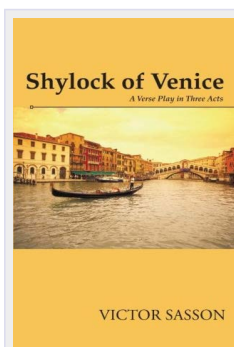
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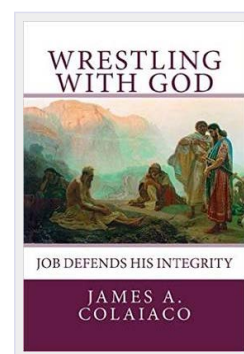


assess just how difficult the closing words of Mark's Gospel may or may not be, I propose that we see what happens if we place the final sentence from Mark at the end of Matthew's Gospel, which as it stands may indeed be said to be open-ended and invite the reader to join in spreading the good news and making disciples of all nations. Here is how Matthew sounds with Mark's final words attached:

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." But they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Clearly in this case, we would not be dealing with an open ending which invites the reader to answer the challenge and complete the narrative in their own life, as some have characterized the ending of Mark.<sup>5</sup> On the contrary, in the context of Matthew's Gospel, this would represent an abrupt closure, one that undermines the very story being told. For unless someone went and told, how can we now be reading about what happened, much less be invited to participate ourselves?

The question we must now ask is whether these same words on the end of Mark's Gospel have the *same effect* of abrupt closure in that context.<sup>6</sup> The short answer is that, in the context of Mark's Gospel, these words do *not* have *precisely* the same effect. The precise nature of the problematic character of Mark's ending can be and has at times been misdiagnosed. For instance, contrary to what Norman R. Petersen has written (giving expression to a common conclusion reached by readers of Mark), it is not the case that "If they [i.e., the women] did not report to the disciples, the disciples did not see Jesus in Galilee or anywhere else and the mission did not get underway."<sup>7</sup> It may be that dissatisfied readers of Mark, whether ancient or modern, have missed a few brief but significant words that mitigate, to a certain extent, the problems created by 16:8. The words "as he told you" (*kathōs eipen hūmin*) at the end of v7 significantly reduce the difficulties of the ending, to an extent that is insufficiently noted in many discussions of this subject. The message of the women was to be a *reminder*, and not the *only* announcement of what was to come. In all extant manuscripts of the Gospel of Mark, these words echo the earlier statement in 14:28 where Jesus tells Peter that after he has risen from the dead, he will go before them into Galilee. This verse, admittedly, sits somewhat awkwardly in the present context, and in the Fayyum Fragment these words are omitted.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, the Fayyum Fragment appears to have a composite character and cannot be used as a basis for regarding Mark 14:28 as a later interpolation into the Gospel (although the words may be a Markan addition to the tradition he inherited).<sup>9</sup> Matthew's Gospel includes these words, and Luke's omission of them is concordant with his account of Jesus instructing the disciples to *remain in Jerusalem* rather than go to



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Galilee. Moreover, even if we were to entertain uncertainty as to whether Mark 14:28 was an original part of the Gospel, it nevertheless remains the case that 16:7, even on its own, lessens the significance of the failure of the women at the tomb to convey the message.<sup>10</sup> This was not the first and only announcement.

The difficulty of the end of Mark's Gospel is thus not that the *other disciples* do not ever get the message but the abrupt character of the ending. As Donald Juel puts it, "As readers, we have been led to expect something other than verse 8" of chapter 16.<sup>11</sup> If the exact problem with Mark's ending has at times been misunderstood, this should not be taken to mean that the ending is *unproblematic*. Even though the message about Jesus going ahead of them to Galilee had been communicated earlier, by none other than Jesus himself, the disciples have consistently failed to understand throughout the Gospel, and thus the possibility remains a real one that Jesus' command may be forgotten or misunderstood. This possibility is compounded by the *flight* of the other disciples and their disappearance from the narrative prior to this point. At the end of the Gospel, we are still left wondering whether the disciples will in fact go to Galilee as Jesus told them to, and, if they do, whether they will see him there.

In noting these unanswered questions which remain at the end of the written Gospel in its earliest form, it is appropriate to make two observations. The first is that the disciples would presumably have fled, sooner or later, to *Galilee*, leaving open the possibility of their fulfilling Jesus' command *inadvertently*. The second is that, given the primarily oral cultural context of early Christianity, it is appropriate to reflect on the significance of the fact that Mark was presumably telling a story which *his readers already knew*, and thus the end of his written Gospel need not have represented, either for him or for them, the *end of the story*. In the terminology of current studies of orality and oral tradition, Mark's Gospel would represent *one performance* of the story, and it is only our disconnection from the oral context of its writing that makes it seem the *definitive* one, if not indeed the *only* one.<sup>12</sup>

One can much more easily imagine an *aide-mémoire* that ends where Mark 16:8 does, than a complete literary work.<sup>13</sup> If Mark's Gospel were intended to preserve a partial written record of a body of oral tradition, then what precisely it contains and where precisely it ends become somewhat less of an issue. I thus propose to focus in what follows less on the original form of the written Gospel and more on how the *story* known to the author and readers of this Gospel continued beyond Mark 16:8. Hopefully in doing so we can avoid an impasse between different approaches to the text since few would deny that the story itself points beyond the current ending, to resurrection appearances not narrated within this Gospel. If I use terminology such as Mark's "missing ending" as shorthand, I intend it to be taken in that sense and not as presupposing a certain view of the extent of the author's literary work.<sup>14</sup>

Let us now turn our attention to the question of whether the continuing story left its

mark on texts that are still extant. This question has received surprisingly little attention, perhaps because of its inevitably speculative character. A noteworthy exception is B. H. Streeter, who wrote in his study of *The Four Gospels*: "that the earliest account of the Resurrection Appearances has disappeared without leaving a trace is in itself... improbable...."<sup>15</sup> But where should we look for traces? Some have suggested that Matthew's ending, or parts of it, were derived from Mark. But this view faces significant difficulties. It seems most probable either that both Matthew and Luke had copies of Mark's Gospel that ended at 16:8, or that they both regarded what followed as unacceptable and decided to continue their stories in different directions.<sup>16</sup> Matthew changes the women's state of mind and introduces an appearance of Jesus in Jerusalem after it has just been announced that he would be seen in Galilee. Luke, on the other hand, has Jesus appear to his disciples in Jerusalem. Perhaps it was the tradition of Jerusalem appearances that made the original ending of Mark (whether it continued beyond 16:8 or not) seem unacceptable to Luke, and perhaps to others as well. But what seems clear is that Matthew and Luke were either trying to make sense of the Gospel of Mark as we now know it, or deliberately sought to take the ending in another direction, or perhaps both.<sup>17</sup>

What is easily overlooked, however, is that we do have a relatively early Gospel that continues in a manner that would provide a natural continuation to the story in Mark's Gospel if it continued past 16:8. We also have a post-resurrection story in a canonical Gospel that might provide corroborating evidence. It is the evidence from these sources that might contain echoes of the continuation of Mark's story to which we now turn.

The Gospel of Peter may be unique among early Christian Gospels in its embracing of those details towards the end of Mark's story that other readers and authors both ancient and modern have found to be problematic, in particular the fear of the women and their failure to say anything to anyone. Indeed, in rather terser fashion than Mark, the short verse that follows the angelic announcement that Jesus has risen says simply, "Then the women fled frightened."<sup>18</sup> The narrative in the Gospel of Peter then continues briefly in a way that it is plausible to suggest that the story known to Mark might have continued. Here are the final lines in what remains of this fragmentary work:

Now it was the final day of the Unleavened Bread; and many went out returning to their home since the feast was over. But we twelve disciples of the Lord were weeping and sorrowful; and each one, sorrowful because of what had come to pass, departed to his home. But I, Simon Peter, and my brother Andrew, having taken our nets, went off to the sea. And there was with us Levi of Alphaeus whom the Lord...

Although the ending of this other Gospel connected by tradition with Peter also ends abruptly, from what remains it seems that we are dealing with a story that would be a natural continuation of what is found in Mark. The male disciples are told nothing of Jesus' body having disappeared from the tomb. They return to Galilee, either because

they recall Jesus telling them to do so, or simply because it was the natural thing to do under the circumstances. We thus find them returning to the previous occupation some of them held (i.e., fishing), although with some others of the group of Jesus' followers remaining with them.

That the Gospel of Peter continues in this way is all the more striking when we consider that this Gospel in places shows evidence of the influence of Matthean details. It is unclear whether the author knew Matthew's Gospel in written form, but *details* included in that Gospel were known to the author. Why, then, would Matthew's "improved" account of the resurrection appearances not be reflected in the Gospel of Peter? Presumably because another story was already known and sufficiently well established that Matthew's proved unable to replace it.

The story that would presumably have followed was of the disciples going fishing (there is a brief mention of this before the text breaks off). This would be a natural conclusion to the story in the Gospel of Mark in which the *first* encounter of the disciples with Jesus also takes place by the sea. Within the New Testament canon, there is a story of precisely this sort, in John chapter 21. This story, commentators have frequently observed, sounds more like an account of a *first* post-resurrection encounter. Its placement after an appearance of Jesus to the disciples in Jerusalem, where they are commissioned and given the Holy Spirit, seems less natural. Perhaps the inclusion of this story in the Gospel of John represents, among other things, an attempt to harmonize an earlier Johannine ending with another account of resurrection appearances that circulated in early Christianity.

To be clear, I am not suggesting that the episode in John 21 *is* the missing ending of Mark's Gospel any more than I am suggesting that the Gospel of Peter's ending was *the same as* the original ending of Mark's Gospel. Nor am I suggesting that either of these Gospels reproduces precisely the story known to the author and earliest readers of Mark. I am merely suggesting that these stories *echo* the continuation of Mark's story, at least in broad outline.

The suggestion that the ending of the Gospel of John reproduces *in detail* the original ending of Mark's Gospel was in fact made by B. H. Streeter. Streeter was of the view that not only the story in chapter 21, but also the appearance of Jesus to Mary Magdalene in the garden, were derived from the Gospel of Mark.<sup>19</sup> This suggestion seems implausible when taken to that extreme because it does not do justice to either the Johannine style of these stories in the form in which they are found in the Fourth Gospel or to the awkwardness of having Jesus appear in Jerusalem to *anyone* after the angel announced that Jesus was going before the disciples to Galilee and that the women told no one. More plausible is the suggestion that John 21 alone reflects knowledge of the continuation of the story in Mark's Gospel. This would fit best both with the ending of Mark in the earliest manuscripts and also the version in the Gospel of Peter.<sup>20</sup>

There is one other early account of the resurrection that may perhaps be relevant.



In 1 Corinthians 15, our earliest record of the tradition about the resurrection appearances, we are told that Jesus was first seen by Peter and then the Twelve. In John 21, if one omits the priority given to the Beloved Disciple when he is inserted before Peter here (as at so many points in John), then Peter would be the first to see Jesus and then the rest of the Twelve who are with him. Although in John 21 only seven disciples are said to have been present and in the Gospel of Peter a different subset of that group seems to have been mentioned, nevertheless the close (if not precise) correspondence is still interesting.<sup>21</sup> The possibility that this post-resurrection story may have influenced the story in Luke 5 is also worth considering.

If we are correct about the way Mark's story continued, there are a number of questions both historical and literary that may result.<sup>22</sup> It seems fair to state that the ending of the story Mark knew (and may or may not have *told in writing*) *fell out of favor* - just as the ending we now have fell out of favor. But if the proposal we have made here about the way Mark's *story* originally continued is correct, then perhaps there is more that can be said about the reasons *why* Mark's ending fell out of favor, which may have resulted in, if not the intentional mutilation of the Gospel, at the very least a lack of interest in preserving the continuation of the story. Perhaps Paul's early version of the tradition about resurrection appearances gives us a clue. After an initial appearance to Peter, Jesus is seen by *the Twelve*. Could the inclusion of Judas (either implicitly or explicitly) have been one of the reasons for the modification of the ending?<sup>23</sup> Another possible factor might be the desire to have Jesus be seen "on the third day," and not some time later in Galilee, with corroboration of the body's disappearance from the tomb by male witnesses presumably occurring later still, or perhaps not at all.

Mark's narrative (in both its present *and* its hypothetically reconstructed forms) leaves a certain ambiguity about the relationship between the *body* that had been in the tomb and the beginnings of resurrection faith. On the one hand, the assertion is made that the body is no longer in the tomb because Jesus has been raised. On the other hand, since the women tell no one, the rise of resurrection faith among the disciples in Galilee must derive *wholly from the experiences* which are usually described as "seeing Jesus."<sup>24</sup> And if one is to even entertain the notion that the Gospel of Mark ended intentionally at 16:8, one will perhaps not find this surprising. For only a community of believers for whom visionary experiences were an ongoing part of their lives could treat the account of the earliest appearances as something unnecessary to narrate.<sup>25</sup> At the same time, their resurrection faith may well have included a claim that God had rescued Jesus' body from its dishonorable burial in the tomb, however they understood the relationship between *that* body and their experiences of *seeing* Jesus.<sup>26</sup>

By way of conclusion, let me sum up the main points covered and the suggestions made in this article:

1. The problematic character of the ending of the Gospel of Mark is not because

the message the women are supposed to pass on does not get delivered. Not once but twice we are told that Jesus delivered this message directly to the disciples on an earlier occasion. Rather, the problematic character of the ending is due to its lack of closure and its failure to provide fulfillment for expectations raised within the narrative of Mark's Gospel itself.

2. This lack of closure may perhaps have seemed less problematic in the context of early Christian communities in which visions of the risen Christ were part of their religious experience. It also needs to be placed in the context of a vibrant oral tradition that was both the author's and the readers' primary mode of contact with stories about Jesus. There can be no doubt that, even if the written Gospel of Mark ended at 16:8, the story known to the author and his readers did not.
3. When we ask how the story continued beyond 16:8, we have important clues in the Gospel of Peter and the Gospel of John.
4. The hypothetical continuation of the story we are proposing, but also the ending in 16:8, reflects a certain ambiguity about the importance of the disappearance of Jesus' body from the tomb to the rise of resurrection faith. If we are correct, then the story may suggest that religious experiences that the inner circle of Jesus' followers had in Galilee may have been sufficient to give rise to Christian faith in the resurrection, apart from the finding of an empty tomb as a contributing factor. The precise nature of those experiences and the time frame during which they occurred we might never be able to pin down, even if we had a full account of the continuing story Mark knew. It is worth observing in conclusion, however, that the role of religious experience as a crucial component of early Christianity, and the context not only for the rise of key beliefs but also the ongoing telling of this story and others, deserves further scholarly attention.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For the changing views on this subject see N. Clayton Croy, *The Mutilation of Mark's Gospel* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2003) pp.18-42. On the other endings added in various manuscripts see Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (United Bible Societies, 1994, pp.102-106).

<sup>2</sup> So rightly Andrew T. Lincoln, "The Promise and the Failure: Mark 16:7, 8" *JBL* 108/2 (1989) 284.

<sup>3</sup> So e.g., Stephen J. Binz, *The Passion and Resurrection Narratives of Jesus* (Collegeville: Liturgical, 1989) p.37.

<sup>4</sup> Robert M. Fowler, "Reading Matthew Reading Mark: Observing the First Steps toward Meaning-as-Reference in the Synoptic Gospels" in Kent H. Richards (ed.), *Society of Biblical Literature 1986 Seminar Papers* (Atlanta: Scholars, 1986) p.14; also *Let The Reader Understand* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991) p.250. In a fictional narrative like the Book of Job, there is little problem when an omniscient narrator tells us things that the characters in the story could not know. It is the assumption that the author of Mark intends to tell us about things that *actually happened* (irrespective of whether he succeeds in doing so) that makes it impossible to treat at face value a statement that no one was told about the things *we are being told about*.

<sup>5</sup> See for instance Maria Gemma Victorino, "Mark's Open Ending and Following Jesus On The Way" in Ingrid Rosa Kitzberger (ed.), *The Personal Voice in Biblical Interpretation* (New York: Routledge, 1999)



p62. Victorino admits that the initial impression is that something is amiss (pp.54-55). It is possible to make sense of the story as it is, but this ought not to be considered to settle the text critical issue.

6 Lest I be misunderstood, I am not in any way opposed to attempts to analyze Mark's Gospel in its earliest known form and assess the viability of treating 16:8 as the original ending the author provided. A significant number of narrative-critical approaches, however, simply set aside or exclude in advance questions about possible mutilation, whether intentional or unintentional. For instance Juel, who rejects the suggestion (in a comment in the Oxford Study Bible) that the story was originally intended to continue beyond its abrupt ending in 16:8 as reflecting "a clear refusal to read the work as it appears in the best-attested readings" (Juel, *Master of Surprises*, pp.108-110). Juel apparently assumes that the only appropriate approach to Mark's Gospel is a *narrative* one focused on the final form in which we now have it. But given that the view that 16:8 is the earliest ending represents the result of text-critical analysis, the exclusion *a priori* of a critical analysis that suggests the Gospel may have originally continued beyond this point seems hard to justify. An honest narrative approach to the story leads naturally to a consideration of the possibility that our earliest manuscript reflects the mutilation of the original form.

If we should not assume that the impression of early ancient readers of Mark was correct, neither should we ignore the fact that several scribes, and the authors of Matthew and Luke, seem to have felt this Gospel required something more in order to be complete. N. Clayton Croy, *The Mutilation of Mark's Gospel* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2003) p.70 n.51 adds the scribe who copied Codex Vaticanus to the list since the scribe left a lengthy space at the end of Mark, one presumes so that the missing ending could be inserted if it were to be found. In view of the (at the very least) *anticlimactic* character of the ending in our earliest manuscripts, *based on internal narrative considerations*, it is absolutely appropriate to explore the *possibility* that Mark 16:8 may be the ending of our earliest copies for reasons other than authorial intent. To make yet another comparison, no one, to my knowledge, has suggested that the Gospel of Peter in the form in which we now have it must be regarded as the entirety of this ancient work and that the abrupt beginning and ending must be given clever narrative interpretations rather than being evaluated as having resulted from unintentional truncation. Indeed, perhaps we should apply this same approach to the well-known lacuna in the Gospel of Philip. Perhaps the author *intended*, indeed *made*, a hole in the manuscript right after writing that Jesus used to kiss Mary Magdalene frequently on ..., leaving the reader to fill in the blank using his own imagination. I am being facetious, of course, but I do so in order to make a point: between those texts that are "obviously" incomplete and those that are "obviously" complete, there lies an area in which there is room for doubt, and it is not inappropriate to place Mark in that category. See further the useful brief discussion in David Bruce Taylor, *Mark's Gospel as Literature and History* (London: SCM, 1992) pp.347-350. On positive views of the women in Mark 16 as showing the influence of Matthew's rewriting of the story, see Robert M. Fowler, "Reader-Response Criticism: Figuring Mark's Reader" in Janice C. Anderson and Stephen D. Moore (eds.), *Mark and Method* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992) pp.78-81.

7 Norman R. Petersen, "When Is the End Not the End? Literary Reflections on the Ending of Mark's Narrative," *Interpretation* 34 (1980) p.154.

8 The Fayyum Fragment is also known as the Rainer Gospel Papyrus.

9 The Fayyum Fragment includes a mixture of details from Matthew and Luke as well as Mark. One plausible explanation of the awkwardness of the words in their current context in Mark is that they are an insertion *by the author* into the story he was telling, perhaps because of the potential to misunderstand the ending he was heading towards.

10 And thus Stephen D. Moore's eloquent assertions about this feature of Mark's Gospel seem to miss the mark/Mark. See his "Deconstructive Criticism" in *Mark and Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992) p.86.

11 Donald H. Juel, *A Master of Surprise: Mark Interpreted* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994) www.statcounter.com He also helpfully mentions dramatic readings of Mark's narrative by David Rhoades and the discomfort in the audience when the ending comes, even among those who know in advance how the story will end (p.108).

12 Ritva H. Williams, *Stewards, Prophets, Keepers of the Word* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2006) pp.142-

144. See further, also Werner H. Kelber, *The Oral and the Written Gospel: The Hermeneutics of Speaking and Writing in the Synoptic Tradition, Mark, Paul, and Q* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1997) p.80.

13 Indeed, Croy, *Mutilation of Mark's Gospel*, p.48, notes that most works that feature sentences ending in *gar* are ones that reflect in their written style the characteristics of *oral communication*.

14 There is another reason why an ending in Mark 16:8 may have been less unsettling for some ancient readers than for some modern ones. The omission of narratives about *others* who saw such things may have been less deeply felt by communities that continued *themselves* to experience visions of the risen and exalted Jesus. See e.g., Rivka Williams' *Stewards, Prophets, Keepers of the Word* on altered states of consciousness in early Christianity. Moreover, if this Gospel were the product of Christians associated with Paul or other leaders whose connection with Christianity began in the post-Easter period, then part of the message of the Gospel may have been to place such individuals on the same level as those who knew Jesus personally in the pre-Easter period. Understanding only comes in light of the cross, and thus those who knew Jesus earlier but did not *understand* him have no advantage and no superiority.

15 Streeter, *Four Gospels*, p.360.

16 Indeed, one could imagine someone *intentionally* mutilating Mark's Gospel because it diverged too much from the account found in other Gospels.

17 Also noteworthy is that, when we reach the ending of Mark's material, neither Matthew nor Luke knew the story of the resurrection in the form in which the other presents it.

18 Raymond Brown's translation.

19 B. H. Streeter, *The Four Gospels: A Study of Origins* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1951) pp.351-352.

20 The suggestion that the author of Peter knew the Gospel of John is less plausible since it does not explain why other material from John does not appear.

21 In the case of John, the difference is at least as likely to reflect the Fourth Gospel's lack of interest in *the Twelve* as a discrepancy between the earliest and our hypothetical second-earliest account of the resurrection appearances. It is worth considering that appearances to the Twelve *all at once* in later Gospels might in turn reflect the influence of 1 Corinthians 15, or of the traditions known to Paul and recorded there.

22 Not all of them depend on our hypothetical reconstruction. Morna Hooker, for instance, has suggested on the basis of the earliest version of Mark we have, that the disciples returned to their homes disappointed after the crucifixion, and the tradition of a *command* to return to Galilee was an attempt to offer a more positive motive for their return to Galilee. Perhaps when, some time later, they eventually return to Jerusalem, the body of Jesus is no longer where it had been. The story of the women finding the empty tomb could be a way of connecting this later piece of information with the story of the resurrection appearances in Galilee (Hooker, *The Gospel According To St. Mark* pp.386-387).

23 See further, Fowler, *Let The Reader Understand* pp.246-247.

24 This is congruent with Paul's very early depiction of resurrection as *bodily*, but as a *transformation* rather than the *same* body (1 Corinthians 15).

25 Lamar Williamson [*Mark* (Louisville: John Knox, 1983) p.286] perhaps captures this when he writes about the lack of a conclusion to Mark's Gospel, "We never know where and when we shall see him; we only know we cannot escape him."

26 See also the *Acts of Paul*, where Paul claims that he will rise again, and the relationship of this "resurrection" to the final resurrection is left unclear.

27 This article is based on a paper presented at the Society of Biblical Literature annual meeting and Midwest regional meeting in 2008. The author is grateful for feedback received in both venues.

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